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Titusville Amateur Radio Club

TARC NEWSLETTER

June 1989

Officers

President: Bud Hughes K4CWG 269-0779
Vice Pres: Bob Nedimeyer W4VQB 269-1878
Secretary: Dennis Wren N4SDI 269-1762
Treasurer: Clyde Lee K4EOS 267-9375

President's Corner

OK Guys and Gals! Field Day is here again **(this weekend)**. We are looking for a good turnout of club members. This event, without a doubt, will be the best chance for our families and friends to get together and enjoy a day of fun.

Food and soft drinks, coffee and tea are on the menu. With the team that Wayne – KB4YLY has put together for field day activities, you ain't seen nut'n like the fun we're gonna have.

Best of 73's, Bud – K4CWG

Minutes of the May 23 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 by Bud (K4CWG). The visitors and members introduced themselves. The minutes were read and accepted. Clyde (K4EOS) gave a treasury report of $325.55 this was accepted.

Ozzie (N4SCY) asked what bands the club will be running for field day so he can set up the computer program for logging.

Les (K4SJC) reported that the bid of $27 for the radio equipment was accepted and the club now owns a GE base station. Ron (KB4DZC) brought up putting the digipeater up at the water tower. After some discussion a motion was made to let it go there as long as it creates no interference problems with the 146.91 machine. The motion was passed. Les (K4SJC) wants to get together another painting party for the repeater site as the shed has acquired some graffiti.

At 7:45 the meeting ended and Bruce (K4KON) gave a talk and showed slides on the equipment use to photograph the launches at KSC. He then showed a slow motion film of a shuttle launch.

Ron (N4SCZ) won the 50/50 and donated it back to the club.

– Dennis / N4SDI

Upcoming Events

> **June 27**, July 25 – next TARC meetings, 7 p.m., JayCees Building on Singleton Ave.
> **June 24-25 – Field Day Operations, starting at 2 p.m. for 24 hours at Draa Field.**
> Every Thursday night – TARC Friendship Net, 7 p.m., 146.91 MHz (-600)
> 3rd Saturday of each month – SBARC / ARRL exams, 9:30 a.m. registration, FIT room Q22 in The Quad (under ham radio mast). For info call Jim Larson, home phone 768-1954 evenings.
> March 23-25, 1990 (tentative) – Orlando Hamcation, Orange County Civic Center (I-4, Exit 29)
> **July 14 – Deadline** for articles to be included in the July edition of the *TARC Newsletter*.

The Editor's Desk

Another slow month for articles has passed and this issue is composed of mostly articles left over from last month's abundance. Thanks to **Val – WB4ZUZ** and **Lloyd – KA4LTK** for the time they've donated to helping put some meat in the club's newsletter. I **do** need input for next month, so don't be shy, even though most of you (I hope) will probably be pooped from helping with field day.

Please do get pooped out from field day! **Wayne – KB4YLY** has invested a tremendous amount of time and effort into designing and making the various antennas to be used this Saturday. Come on out and QSO for an hour or two and help put TARC on the field day map as one of the high point scorers. Ignore those so-and-so's that say we can't do it; stop on in when you're out driving around town and join us.

I received a copy of ***Digital Digest*** in the mail the other day. This is a professional looking commercial magazine. Although small compared to the likes of QST et. al., it contains wall to wall articles relating to

See **Desk** on back.

Printing Courtesy Of

Brevard Office Equipment Inc.
269-2327

Upgrading...

Anyway, I walked away from the test at 3:00 with my Advanced certificate. They tell me my license will arrive in six to eight weeks.

The following week I went to FIT in Melbourne to try for 20 WPM and Extra theory. As I expected, there were about fifteen people hoping to pass tests that day. I arrived at 9:00, testing began at 10:00.

They called my name to come in to the next room for the 20 WPM test. I grabbed a pencil and went. The test was only a typical QSO in that it began and ended with two amateur calls. In between was a poor guy's dissertation about his RFI filters, or as I copied them, POBLM WITH RFI FLTR. There were numbers and punctuation all through the QSO. I still copied about 75% of the text and, of course, about 10% of the numbers.

The test came, and it was FILL IN THE BLANKS. Not simple questions like what kind of rig does he have. No, it was more like "How long is his dipole", "how far off the ground is his dipole", and "What was the balance in his checking account". There were four answers that called for numbers, none of which I could answer. C'est la vie.

As we turned in our code tests, we were handed our written tests. I didn't know I would be taking the written test immediately after the code, so I didn't have my calculator with me. I had to go get it after I had already started the test. They eyed me suspiciously, then permitted me to go.

Then they began calling names for the 13 WPM code test. The 13 WPM test takers began filing in. No problem, they were quiet when they saw us taking written tests. But when they began the 13 WPM code test, not many of us returned the favor. There I was, ready to turn the page, but I didn't dare because the others were taking the 13 WPM test. I sat perfectly still until their tape ended. Others didn't think about the distraction caused by rustling papers during a code test. (They were probably the ones that knew how long and high Mr. RFI's dipole was.) During the 13 WPM test, examiners would occasionally walk about the room as quietly as possible. The floor was terrazzo and there was the usual sprinkling of sand on it. To me, the sound was deafening.

When my written test was over, I got a certificate for passing the Extra theory. I said that I needed my earlier certificate back, because it gave me privileges. The examiner seemed unsure. Sure enough, he called me the next day and asked me to mail him a photocopy of the earlier certificate.

I know that examiners are testing amateurs as an act of kindness. They get nothing out of it. They should be thanked for the selfless act of testing us. They also put up with a lot of anguish we dish out over things that are not their faults. Still I think if they were better organized all of us would get to go home earlier and they might get to say a few more "Congratulations" than they do now.

DB or not DB?
by Lloyd Mullins KA4LTK

DB stands for decibel, on tenth of a bel. Okay, so what's a bel? Well... the bel was named for Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone. It seems that the American Telephone and Telegraph Company had been using "one mile of standard cable" as their signal level reference device. The ratio between the volume of the signal put into one end of the cable and that of the same signal taken out at the other end was called a "transmission unit". In other words, the cable served as an attenuator and rovided a not so handy comparison device for determining signal strength ratio.

In 1924 an international advisory committee, including representatives of the Bell Telephone System, met to establish international standards forr the transmission and reception of voice signals by telephone wires (i.e. land-line). It was agreed that the representatives should recomment to their respective countries that AT&T's standard transmission be adopted, since it conveniently represented a logarithmic power ratio between input and output signal strength. One of the delegates to the conference (perhaps a Bell representative?) suggested honoring the inventor of the telephone sounder - Bell - by changing the name of the standard unit to "bel" when it was calculated with common logarithms (base 10) and "neper" when calculated with natural logarithms (base e). It seems that neper is a contraction of "Nepier", the Scottish sheep farmer and mathmatician credited with discovering the principals of natural logarithms. In any case, two famous persons were honored that day, and the names have stayed to present.

The bel was an inconveniently large value for use in those days of small amplification factors and limited power ratios, so the countries decided to adopt a smaller and more commonly workable unit. Coincidently, one standard transmission unit was exactly equal to one tenth of a bel, so it was approved then and there to adopt the decibel as the working unit of measurement.

QST DE W1AW
HR ARRL BULLETIN NR 28 ARLB028
FROM ARRL HEADQUARTERS
NEWINGTON CT JUNE 12, 1989
TO ALL RADIO AMATEURS BT

On June 9, the Federal Communications Commission released the report and order completing the reorganization of Part 97 of the FCC rules governing the amateur radio and amateur satellite services. The new rules will be effective September, 1989.

Copies of the report and order are available. Call the regulatory information department at HQ for more information. AR

TARC Needs YOU at Field Day

Upgrading is Degrading

Editorial By Theresa "Val" Valek

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The ARRL is concerned that getting an amateur license is too tough, so they are proposing a "no-code" test. If the ARRL is really serious about making it easier to get a license, they should give the job of testing back to the FCC, or perhaps Marquis DeSade.

At first, it seemed to me that it would be easier to get licensed or upgraded in the friendly midst of other amateurs. I upgraded in 1978 to Technician Class at the FCC office in Tampa. Back then you needed an appointment made months in advance, a day off from work (because the tests were on weekdays), and a good map. It was cold, clinical, and unfriendly.

Now it seems that the inmates are running the asylum. I preregistered for the test on Hamfest Saturday. To do so, I waited my turn in line and was given a 610 to fill out. I stepped away from the table to fill it out, then got back in line. I waited in line again and was then given a little local form they would need so they could place me the next day. Again, I stepped away from the table to fill out the form. Back in line, they finally took my money and a copy of my license and told me where and when to show up the next day.

Not wanting to put it off for the last minute, I began studying for the General theory test at about 10:00 the night before the test. I had the ARRL VEC question pool. It took about two hours to go through the book and highlight all the answers, reading the questions only once. I went back to the first page and there I saw words that would change my life. It said that anyone with a Technician Class license earned before March 21, 1987 would not need to take the General Class theory. What a relief. I would only need to pass the 13 wpm code and they would hand me a certificate for my General Class license.

Knowing the General was in the bag, I went on to study the Advanced Class Theory. Again, it took about two hours to read the questions and highlight the correct answers. By this time it was 2:00 in the morning. It was okay if I didn't pass the Advanced Theory, because I was secure in the knowledge the General was mine for just a code test. I went to bed.

I arrived at the appointed time, 9:00. The hysteria was about to begin. It was obvious that some of the VEs missed the planning meetings for this.

9:00 All of you who have preregistered and need to take written tests should report to 11 B for tests at 9:30.

9:05 All who preregistered but have no blue sheet should get in line to pick up your 610.

9:10 All who preregistered should get in line to get your 610, regardless of whether you have a blue sheet.

10:00 Everyone, preregistered or not, wanting to take a 20 WPM code test should report to 11 B right now.

So preregistration buys you nothing but an obligation to return the following day. At this point we were all equal. The room filled with all the 20 WPM hopefuls (there were about fifteen of us) and a few 13 WPM hopefuls. There were strict rules for silence. It was quiet.

Hoping to pass, but not really expecting to, I took the 20 WPM test. What a humbling experience! The code tape had a lot of hiss, but the code on it was sent flawlessly. We were given a multiple guess test and lots of time to work on it.

The grading was handled well. They would call a name, the person would put his hand up, and the grader would call out either "Congratulations" or "Sorry 'bout that". Since only half of this group passed, those of us with "Sorry 'bout that"s didn't feel bad.

Then mysterious paper shuffling went on between the graders. I think they were trying to arrange us by categories: o passed, this was the only test to be taken, process and turn him loose o failed, this was the only test to be taken, no processing needed o anyone taking more tests, give back 610 for next test

I got my 610 back from the failed 20 WPM at 10:45 . At 10:50 they came around and collected it again for the 13 WPM. The 13 WPM test was given. I copied enough to quickly pass the test. I turned mine in first, hoping to make a quick get away.

This time the paper shuffling went differently. As each test was graded it was sorted and processed. In doing so, it took nearly an hour to get them all returned, this time 5 minutes apart. It was 12:05 when they told me I passed my 13 WPM test and returned my paperwork. Seeing I was trying for Advanced, the grader told me to go next door for my 3B (General theory) and 4A (Advanced theory) tests.

It was then I whispered that I had been Technician Class since 1978 or so and would not need to take the General Theory to get my General Class license. He looked my license and said my license didn't prove that, since I renewed it in 1988. I said "I'll show you a call book from any year between 1978 and 1986 to prove it." No, he needed either a copy of my old license or a letter from the FCC proving when I upgraded to Technician.

I stood in line more than an hour waiting to take written tests. We relaxed and shot the breeze waiting our turns. I went in and took the Advanced Theory. I passed it, but just barely. The examiners urged me to try the General Theory, even though I was unprepared. It would save me having to write to the FCC for verification that I upgraded to Tech in 1978. I tried it and I passed it. Pure dumb luck.

See **Upgrading** on next page.

The ***TARC Newsletter*** is (usually) published on a monthly basis. Articles are published based on their newsworthiness to TARC membership, space available, and ease of entry to the publishing medium.

Preferred transfer methods are EMail to *Doug Reed* at Tech-Talk BBS, EMail on 2 meter packet to N4QVY@KB4LB or N4QVY@WD4HIM, direct packet, 3.5" AmigaDOS 880K disk, 3.5" MS-DOS 360K disk, 5.25" MS-DOS 360K disk, direct landline modem, and print / hand-written / hardcopy formats, in that order. Separate each paragraph with a blank line for ease of re-formatting into a publishing format.

Article / classified deadline is two Fridays prior to the date of the monthly meeting. The next deadline is **July 14**.

Articles may be given to the editor, Doug - N4QVY, at the IHOP on net nights, or left with Bud - K4CWG, where it will hopefully make its way to the aforementioned editor.

The ***TARC Newsletter*** is created on a Commodore Amiga computer using Gold Disk's PageSetter and LaserScript publishing software. Final proofs are printed on a Postscript compatible laser printer.

FIELD DAY 89
JUNE 24-25 - 2 P M
DRAA FIELD

Desk...
the digital world of ham radio as well as advertisements from **all** the packet companies and some local businesses. Articles seem to originate from around the U.S. and most are transferred via Compuserve's HamNet forum (via land-line). Also included are columns on new products such as the Amiga Video Transceiver (AVT) that will allow those of us with Amiga computers to receive / transmit facsimile and SSTV. I'd like to believe that the folks at AEA actually listened to me when I mentioned that the Amiga's 16 gray scale abilities would pretty much be perfect for such a product when I'd heard about it two Orlando hamfests ago, but I'm sure that it was probably some Amiga / ham hackers who actually got together and made such a product available. AEA plans to release it this summer, according to *Digital Digest*. *Digital Digest* is published once every two months and is available from ***Digital Digest, 4063 N. Goldenrod Road, Winter Park, FL 32792.*** Cost is $16 per year or $2.75 for a single copy. I grew up on the other side of the dirt clod mountain from there, so I can vouch that this is a real place.

Until next month – 73 – Doug / N4QVY

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YOUR CLUB DUES EXPIRE: JAN 90
73 GL ES GUD DX de TARC !